

MOSQUITOES AND WEST NILE VIRUS

The best line of defense against mosquito bites and West Nile Virus is protecting you and your family. Here are a few suggestions from the Douglas Board of Health:

- If possible, avoid outdoor activities between dusk and dawn.
- To protect yourself when mosquitoes are most active, wear a long-sleeved shirt and long pants.
- Use a mosquito repellent containing DEET and follow the label directions for use (over use can be toxic). Never use DEET on infants and follow directions for use on children.
- Once inside wash off all repellents.
- Make sure children are covered up when playing outside and use mosquito netting on baby carriages.
- Dispose of, or regularly empty, any outside containers that will hold standing water. Old tires are a common place for mosquitoes to breed.
- Drill drainage holes in any containers (garbage, recycling, etc.) that need to be kept outside.
- Do not allow water to stagnate in plastic wading pools, bird baths, swimming pools or ornamental ponds.

PROTECTION AGAINST RABIES

The Douglas Board of Health would like to provide you with the following information to lessen the spread of rabies:

- Make sure your family members do not pet or feed any animal that they do not know, this includes farm animals or pets. Make sure they avoid wild animals, especially bats, skunks, foxes and raccoons.
- Make sure that your pets are vaccinated against rabies and that their shots are up to date. By law, dogs, cats and ferrets must be vaccinated.
- Feed pets indoors and keep them indoors at night.
- Garbage attracts wild animals, fasten garbage can lids.
- Cap your chimney to prevent entrance into your home.
- Do not touch a sick or injured wild animal.

LYME DISEASE AND TICKS

In Massachusetts Lyme disease is spread by deer ticks. The best prevention is to protect yourself and your family from tick bites.

- If you live, work or spend leisure time in an area likely to have ticks, make sure you check yourself for ticks at least once a day.
- Stick to main pathways and the center of trails when hiking.
- Wear long-sleeved, light colored shirts and long pants tucked into socks.
- Use tick repellent (with care). Do not use repellent on infants and make sure repellent is safe for children, always read labels and wash off repellent after coming inside.

Outside preventative measures include:

- Keep grass cut short.
- Keep bushes pruned low around the house and snow walls.
- If you choose to use a pesticide to spray your yard area, hire a licensed applicator experienced with tick control.

You can always feel free to contact your local or State health departments.

Douglas Board of Health
Mass. Dept. of Public Health

(508) 476-4000 Ext. 352
(617) 983-6800 or www.state.ma.us/dph